

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts
Council Meeting
Thursday, September 30, 2010
4:00 PM
RISCA Offices
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI

Council Members Present: Bill Bracket, Chairman; Carrie Zaslow, Vice Chairman; Mary K. Talbot, Secretary; Beverly Blais; Dana Neugent; Carolyn Peck; Jean Rondeau; Regina Partridge

Council Members Unable to Attend: Nancy Chapman; Ann Clanton; Andrea Valentini; David Wax

Staff Members Present: Randall Rosenbaum, Executive Director; Steven Feinberg, Executive Director Film & Television; Sherilyn Brown, Education Director; Cristina DiChiera, Director Individual Artists Program; Elizabeth Keithline, Project Grants for Organizations/Public Art; Donna Fiske, Fiscal & Office Manager; Daniel Kahn, Assistant, Education Program; Carol Conley, Asst. to the Executive Director of Film & Television; Elena Calderón Patiño, Community Arts Program Director

Public Present: Adriana Thomas, Policy Analyst, House of Representatives

Chairman Bill Bracket called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.

Approval of Minutes: June 24, 2010 meeting

(Motion: Mary K. Talbot, seconded by Regina Partridge)

Election Process for Board Chair:

Chairman Bill Brackett discussed his ongoing concern regarding the need for a succession process for officers that would strengthen and stabilize leadership for the Council. Such a process would be challenging due to the vagaries of Gubernatorial appointments and three-year terms. And change would also require the amendment of current procedures and regulations. Chairman Brackett recommended that a small committee be formed to get members ideas and opinions on this issue. One recommendation offered by the Chairman would be to create one two-year term-limited term for Chairman and for the Council to elect a Chair-elect in year two of that term. The Chair-elect would move into the Chairman's position at the end of his or her term. A suggestion was made by Mary K. Talbot that this be a Co-Chair rather than a Chair-elect so that the leadership team would have time to build on this relationship.

Noting that Council members serve until they are replaced, Chairman Brackett also wondered about the possibility of a Council Member becoming an elected officer even though their term had expired.

Chairman Brackett asked Beverly Blais to work with staff to prepare something for the Council to review at its December meeting. Chairman Brackett invited other members of the Council to contact staff or Ms. Blais if they were interested in working on this proposal.

Support for Community-Based Festivals:

At the June 2010 Council meeting Vice Chair Carrie Zaslow "voiced her concern about the lack of funding to organizations serving the homeless and to neighborhood organizations for festivals and community celebrations. Carrie and Elena [Calderón-Patiño] volunteered to explore issues related to the support of these festivals and community celebrations and report their recommendations at the September Council meeting."

Elena and Carrie reported that they have had some productive discussions on this issue, particularly regarding efforts to make grants more accessible for neighborhood arts celebrations and community festivals of diverse cultures. Carrie and Elena will continue to meet to review these issues, and hope to come to the December Council meeting with some recommendations.

Citizenship Guidelines for Awarding Grants:

Mr. Rosenbaum reported to the Council on an eligibility issue that currently allows individuals who are not U.S. citizens to apply to RISCA for support. Part

of the problem lies in the lack of clarity in state law regarding who is a legal resident. Mr. Rosenbaum and Cristina DiChiera reported on their research into this question, which was promulgated by the receipt of an application from an artist who is in the United States with a work visa. State law defines a resident as someone who is domiciled in our state for more than 182 consecutive days. RISCA guidelines quote state law in the matter of eligibility, and legal staff at the Department of Administration reported that there is no legal impediment toward providing support to noncitizens. However there is some question about the appropriateness of awarding state grants to non-US citizens. The Council discussed this issue. There was general consensus that some revision of the guidelines needs to take place to clarify eligibility requirements. Chairman Brackett asked Mr. Rosenbaum and Ms. DiChiera to draft guideline language for review at the next Council meeting.

Complimentary Tickets:

Chairman Brackett reported to the Council that a controversy in New Jersey about the use of complimentary tickets by members of the board of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts motivated him to ask about RISCA policy regarding free tickets. Mr. Rosenbaum reported that this has been a matter of ongoing discussion with the State Ethics Commission. Typically, Arts Council staff request and receive complimentary tickets to arts events as a way of monitoring the work of your constituents. This is a necessary part of doing business. Tickets for Council members falls more under the State ethics laws, which set a dollar figure for accepting "gifts". Chairman Brackett asked Council staff to prepare a simple brief for Council members on this issue for review at the next Council meeting.

Public Art Update:

Elizabeth Keithline reported on the public art commission for the new State Police headquarters building. The Council at a previous meeting approved the commissioning of a larger than life size sculpture of a state trooper in full uniform to be completed by November 30th. This was agreed to by all parties in writing. The state police decided to move up the dedication ceremony for the new building and asked for the sculpture to be installed by mid-October. After discussion with the artist we discovered it was possible to get the foundry to move the casting and delivery up but would require a rush fee of \$20,000. The State Police were unable to meet the expense.

Installation has begun on the public art piece at the Dunkin' Donuts Center by artist Mikiyoung Kim.

Two public art projects have reached the finalist selection phase: URI College of Pharmacy and the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Plaques have been ordered for the public art works recently installed at TF Green.

National Cultural Database Project:

Mr. Rosenbaum reported that agreement has been reached on bringing the National Cultural Database Project (CDP) to Rhode Island in partnership with the Rhode Island Foundation. The CDP will allow us to gather a significant amount of information that will give us greater insight into the health of arts organizations and the contribution of the arts to the local economy. Members of the Rhode Island arts community to attended a workshop earlier in the year were enthusiastic about the program. Under this agreement, RISCA and the Rhode Island Foundation will share the costs of this project. Rhode Island contribution will be approximately \$12,000 per year for the next three years, to be paid for out of federal funds.

A motion was made and seconded that RISCA enter into a three-year agreement with the Pew Charitable Trusts, in partnership with the Rhode Island Foundation, to bring the Cultural Database Project to Rhode Island.

(Motion Beverly Blais; seconded by Carolyn Peck)

Professional Artist Development Grants:

Ms. DiChiera presented the recommendations of a panel regarding the awarding of professional artist development grants. A motion was made and seconded to accept the panel's recommendations.

(Motion Regina Partridge; seconded by Carolyn Peck)

FY12 Budget:

Mr. Rosenbaum reported that the Council staff had been working over the past few months to prepare the agency budget presentation for the FY2012 year. As per the instructions of the Budget Office, the RISCA budget must meet financial targets set for it and other state agencies. The target amounts require that we reduce grants this year by \$40,951 and \$258,036 for next year. This being a gubernatorial election year, the budget also contains proposals for the maintenance of current services, as a consideration for the next governor.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the budget as presented and authorize its transmittal to the Governor and legislative leaders.

(Motion Mary K. Talbot; seconded by Beverly Blais)

FY12 Federal Grants:

Mr. Rosenbaum reported that each year RISCA prepares and submits its applications to the National Endowment for the Arts. Every three years we submit a detailed application. This is an off-year, and a less detailed application is submitted. In addition to the general agency application, RISCA submitted a request for support through the Folk & Traditional Arts Infrastructure program. Last year this application was not funded given the uncertainty (at the time) regarding the hiring of a folk arts coordinator. With Elena Calderon Patino on staff, Mr. Rosenbaum said we were hopeful regarding funding.

A motion was made and seconded to authorize the submission of our grant applications to the National Endowment for the Arts.

(Motion Mary K. Talbot; seconded by Beverly Blais)

Financial Reports:

Mr. Rosenbaum made a brief report on current financials. Expenditures are as expected for this point in the year.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the financial reports as presented.

(Motion Regina Partridge; seconded by Beverly Blais)

A variety of reports from staff were then presented:

Stem to Steam:

Ms. Brown reported on efforts to engage the arts in the state and national STEM discussion. STEM stands for the educational initiatives related to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics education; our intention, with support from a variety of community partners, is to add the Arts to the mix (STEAM). Ms. Brown has been working with Rhode Island College and RISD on planning for a conference. Ms. Brown reported that she is representing RISCA

on the Advisory Committee and they are applying for a grant to help with this program.

Film and Television:

Mr. Feinberg reported that the ABC TV series "Body of Proof" is filming through December. Two movies were just completed and a third movie will begin to film soon.

Dana Neugent reported on a project that would involve college film/video students documenting and filming arts events in the community.

Diversity Exhibit:

Ms. Patino reported on the Diversity Exhibit at the Atrium Gallery at One Capitol Hill. It has been well received, and will be followed next month by a show featuring work by Latino artists.

Toolkits

Ms. Brown gave a report on Rhode Island high school students who have been creating film clips to demonstrate the need for arts programs in school. Their work will be aired on Saturday nights beginning in October on PBS and will be called "Confessions of a Teenage Critic". Ms. Brown also invited Council members to a reception scheduled on Tuesday, October 5th at 5PM at the Shepard Building in Providence for a premiere showing of this series.

Ms. Brown used this event as a point of departure for a discussion of the community toolkit series being developed in cooperation with the Arts Learning Network and others. The toolkits are designed to advocate for support for arts education in Rhode Island schools at the community level. Ms. Brown shared a series of materials that had been developed for this advocacy campaign.

Adjournment:

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 PM
(Motion: Regina Partridge; seconded Beverly Blais)